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**Role of ECDE Administration on Choice of Teaching Methods used by Early Childhood
Development Education Teachers in Keiyo South District****Betty Jebet Cheruiyot**
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inconsistencies in the ECDE teacher training in Kenya. The purpose of this study was to establish teacher factors that influence the choice of teaching methods used by ECDE teachers in Keiyo South District. This study was guided by the Learning Styles theory and adopted a descriptive survey design. The study targeted 126 public ECDE centres, 252 ECDE teachers and 126 ECDE head teachers in the public ECDE centres in the district. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 38 public ECDE centres. The study used the questionnaire, interview schedule and observation checklist to collect data. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics and presented using frequencies and percentages. The availability of teaching /learning materials, age of the ECDE child, mastery of content and teacher's experience influenced the choice of teaching method. Others such as teacher motivation, number of children and the school locality also tend to influence the choice of the teaching method. It was also established that there was a relationship between the factors and choice of teaching method. A teacher should embrace the use of a variety of teaching methods; they should appropriately choose the teaching methods in consideration of the learners' needs.

ABSTRACT

The untrained Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) teacher tends to escape from children's problems instead of dealing with them. They do not know how to deal with different age groups since they do not know what tasks to give which group of children. The type of training enables a teacher to escape the constraints of a curriculum. Once this issue can be established, preferably by research, it will ease the

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Introduction

School administrators should pay attention to continuity in curricula, home-school communication, and a welcoming environment for family and children (Broström, 2002). The primary school administrators within a certain area can coordinate by creating transition teams in the district and the schools for development and implementation of a systematic transition programme, so that pupils will go through the same process of adjustment to primary school, regardless of the particular school that they attend (Margetts, 2000).

For all activities to go on well in a school there is need for its administrator to master the management skills and this was the reason why Primary School Management project was initiated in 1996 (MOEST, 1999). This came as a result of some findings that some head teachers were appointed from serving teachers and did not have any managerial skills. Research on effective school governance has identified a number of factors which draw attention to the effectiveness of an institution and hence a smooth transition, these include; raising pupils' self-esteem and positions of responsibility, orderly and attractive working environment and parental involvement in children's learning activities. Though not exhaustive the above factors provide a useful background and would require the head-teacher to

supervise, monitor and always evaluate the school programmes (MoEST, 2000).

According to ministry of Education Science and Technology out that the head teacher should be aware of the children's emotional experiences as they undergo the transition process as this will ease some of the emotional difficulties children encounter in the new environment (MoEST 2000). However, the head teacher should work in collaboration with both the pre-primary and the lower primary school teachers to ensure that the children get the best guidance and assistance as they settle in their new classes. It is also important for primary school administrators to carry out induction or orientation sessions for the new entrants, preferably in the company of their parents. This can be done by explaining unfamiliar sounds and events, such as the school bell, older learners, big buildings and so on. This experience can be overwhelming, so children need a clear explanation of these phenomena which is sensitive but not too complicated (Dockett and Perry, 2002). Such a session can also include parents and pre-school teachers, which will allow stakeholders to address their concerns. It is probable that the lack of school administration involvement in managing pre-school to primary school transitions can be attributed to the perceived distance between home and school. Christenson (1999) declares that the psychological distance between home and school is the

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result of the autonomy declared by the two institutions on themselves. Primary school programmes, unlike those of pre-schools, are more bureaucratic in nature, allowing for limited opportunity for dialogue and frequency of contacts between families and schools. While schools are charged with the responsibility of educating children, they should nevertheless involve parents as much as possible, since the family is a powerful and influential requirement for success in formal education.

Graue (1999) holds the view that it is the responsibility of the school to ensure that it is ready to adapt to the diverse and changing needs of children undergoing transitions. He alleges that children are dependent on the ability of the school administration to extend itself towards them rather than children alone being ready to meet the demands of the school. Primary school administrators thus have to cultivate such a relationship in order to counter information from competing sources such as the mass media and peers, and because discontinuities between families and schools compromise the effectiveness of both school administrators and parents as agents of socialization. It is therefore up to the school administrators to facilitate the contact between teachers and parents, as neither side may be willing or able to take the first step. Therefore this study sought to find out the role of ECDE administration on choice of teaching methods used by ECDE

teachers in Keiyo South District.

This study was guided by the Learning Styles theory by McCarthy (1980) which emphasizes the fact that individuals perceive and process information in very different ways. The Learning Styles theory implies that how much individuals learn has more to do with whether the educational experience is geared toward their particular style of learning than whether or not they are "smart." In fact, educators should not ask, "Is this student smart?" but rather "How is this student smart?"

The concept of learning styles is rooted in the classification of psychological types. The learning styles theory is based on research demonstrating that, as the result of heredity, upbringing, and current environmental demands, different individuals have a tendency to both perceive and process information differently.

Methodology

Descriptive Survey research design was used in this study. The study targeted all the ECDE teachers and head teachers in the district. There were 126 public ECDE centres, 252 ECDE teachers and 126 ECDE head teachers in the public ECDE centres in the district. The numbers of private ECDE centres in the district were 40 with 40 ECDE head teachers and 80 ECDE teachers. The

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researcher used simple random sampling to select 12 private ECDE centres from the district. Therefore a sample of 12 out of the total 40 private ECDE centres was studied. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 38 public ECDE centres out of the total 126 public ECDE centres in the district. The study used the questionnaire, interview schedule and observation checklist. The reliability of data collection instruments was determined from the pilot study where the researcher administered the research instruments to the head teachers and teachers of two ECDE centres in the neighbouring Keiyo North District. The Cronbach's coefficient alpha was applied on the results obtained to determine how items correlate in the same instrument. Cronbach's coefficient Alpha of 0.7 was

obtained which was good enough to enhance the identification of the dispensable variables and deleted variables. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics which included frequencies, percentages and chi square. Data was presented using tables.

Results

Sponsors' Influence in the Choice of Teaching Method

From the study 33 (66.0%) of the ECDE head teachers were of the view that there was no influence from the sponsors on the choice of teaching methods. Table 1 captures the views of the head teacher on the influence of the sponsors in the choice of teaching methods.

Table 1 Sponsor's Influence on Choice of Teaching Method

Influence	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	17	34.0
No	33	66.0
Total	50	100.0

Ownership and the Choice of Teaching Methods

To establish the role played by the administration in the running of the ECDE centres, the researcher sought the views of the participating teachers on the suggested roles. The teacher's responses are shown in Table 2. The study sought to find the

opinion of the ECDE teachers on factors that influence the choice of teaching methods. The study findings showed that respondents who indicated that the various doctrines of the sponsor of ECDE influence the choice of teaching methods were 66 (66%) ECDE teachers, while those who disagreed were 34 (34%) ECDE teachers. The respondents who indicated that the

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sponsor of the institution procure teaching and learning materials which influence the choice of teaching methods were 55(55%) ECDE teachers, while those who disagreed were 45(45%) ECDE teachers.

The respondents who indicated that the secular music dance influence the choice of teaching methods were 82 (82%) ECDE

teachers, while those who disagreed were 18 (18%) ECDE teachers. The respondents who indicated that the societal needs influence the choice of teaching methods were 74 (74%) ECDE teachers, while those who disagreed were 26(26%) ECDE teachers.

Table 2: ECDE Teachers Response on the Ownership of ECDE Centres

Ownership	Agree	Percentage (%)	Disagree	Percentage (%)
The various doctrines of the Sponsor of ECDE	66	66	34	34
The sponsor of your Institute procures teaching and learning materials	55	55	45	45
The secular music dance influence the choice of teaching methods	82	82	18	18
The societal needs influence the choice of teaching methods	74	74	26	26
The sponsor of the ECDE conduct In-service courses for the Teachers On teaching methods	35	35	65	65

The respondents who indicated that the sponsor of the ECDE conduct in-service courses for the teachers on teaching methods influence the choice of teaching methods were 35 (35%) ECDE teachers representing, while those who disagreed were 65 (65%) ECDE teachers. This implies that a majority of the respondents stated that ownership of the ECDE centres; societal needs and secular music dance influenced the choice of teaching methods used in ECDE centres. However, it was noted that the owners of ECDE centres did not regularly sponsor teachers to attend in-

service courses.

Role of Administration on the Choice of Teaching Methods

The study further sought to find out the opinion of the ECDE teachers on role of administration. The study findings showed that respondents who indicated that religious organizations as the sponsor influence the choice of the teaching method were 47(47%) ECDE teachers, while those who disagreed were 53 (53%) ECDE teachers. The respondents who indicated that salaries paid to ECDE teachers

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influence the choice of the teaching method were 88(88%) ECDE teachers, while those who disagreed were 12 (12%) ECDE teachers. The respondents who indicated that lack of motivation from the administration influenced the choice of the teaching method were 75 (75%) ECDE teachers, while those who disagreed were 25 (25%) ECDE teachers. The respondents who indicated that failure for administration to procure the teaching

learning materials influenced the choice of the teaching method were 78(78%) ECDE teachers, while those who disagreed were 22 (22%) ECDE teachers. The respondents who indicated that the administrations' preference for teaching methods to be used by ECDE teachers influenced the choice of the teaching methods were 69(69%) ECDE teachers, while those who disagreed were 31(31%) ECDE teachers as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 ECDE Teachers Response on the Role of Administration

Role Of Administration	Agree	Percentage (%)	Disagree	Percentage (%)
Religious organizations as the sponsor influence the choice of the teaching method	47	47	53	53
Salaries paid to pre-school teachers	88	88	12	12
Lack of motivation from the administration influence the choice of teaching methods	75	75	25	25
Failure for administration to procure the teaching learning materials influence the choice of teaching methods	78	78	22	22
The administration has some preference to teaching methods to be used by ECDE teachers	69	69	31	31
The procurement of teaching and learning materials influence the choice of teaching methods	90	90	10	10
coming to school late influence the choice of teaching methods	91	91	9	9

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The various doctrines of the sponsor of your ECDE influence the choice of teaching methods	46	46	54	54
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The respondents who indicated that procurement of teaching and learning materials influenced the choice of the teaching method were 90(90%) ECDE teachers, while those who disagreed were 10 ECDE teachers (10%). The respondents who indicated that coming to school late influenced the choice of the teaching method were 91(91%) ECDE teachers, while those who disagreed were nine (9%) ECDE teachers. The respondents who indicated that the various doctrines of the sponsor influenced the choice of the teaching methods were 46(46%) ECDE teachers, while those who disagreed were 54(54%) ECDE teachers. These findings show that salaries paid to ECDE teachers, lack of motivation from the administration and the

procurement of teaching and learning materials influence the choice of teaching methods.

Relationship between the ECDE administration and the choice of teaching methods

Further analysis was done to establish relationship between the ECDE administration and the choice of teaching methods with $\chi^2 = 12.461$, $df = 5$, $p = 0.042$ was found. Since $p < 0.05$. Therefore, there was a significant relationship between the ECDE administration and the choice of teaching methods. This implies that the administration of ECDE centre influences the choice of teaching methods.

Table 4 Chi-Square Results on Administration and Choice of Teaching Methods

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.461 (a)	5	.042
Likelihood Ratio	17.973	5	.038
Linear- by- linear association	.842	1	.000

Discussion

That there was a relationship between school administration and the choice of

teaching methods and between school ownership and the choice of teaching methods on the other hand, it lends a lot of

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support to the teaching environment and teaching resources. Indeed, it is important to consider fully the overall arrangement of the teaching centres and conditions of equipment and materials used.

The teachers noted that it was the responsibility of the administration to ensure that they enrich the teaching/learning environment with the requisite experiences necessary for the child's development. Indeed, play based methods will call for a wide variety of indoor and outdoor materials that should be sourced for. As noted by Mina (1997), "the environment in which children develop and learn involve the people with whom the child interacts, the objects or material provision they encounter, and the places and events experienced." The setting of the environment will greatly influence the experiences to expose the child to. Space and material arrangements will encourage or change children's behaviours when they interact with the teacher. The teacher should then choose the methods that are likely to maximize this type of environment. The ownership through the administration should furthermore ensure that the working environment is conducive. This is in tandem with the views expressed by Ndani (1994) who noted that "for an ECDE teacher to deliver properly, the working environment needed to be clean and spacious with necessary facilities. Dani (1999) further noted that limiting environmental

conditions tended to seriously affect children's play development and, in turn decreasing the number and quality of learning opportunities, practice and new skill refinement.

Provision of spacious and well arranged classrooms will facilitate children's learning by easing crowding and encouraging exploration and experimentation with materials while reducing physical aggression. The provision of facilitates and instructional materials is essential to the choice of the teaching method. Both the activity based methods and play based methods require particular materials to be implemented. By providing the materials, the sponsor directly impacts on the choice of teaching methods to be employed. As noted by Koech (1999), the quality and adequacy of such resources as physical equipment, teaching and learning materials will have a direct bearing on quality learning since they determine how effectively the curriculum will have been implemented.

Conclusion

This study established that there was a relationship between the role played by the administration and the choice of teaching method. The teachers noted that it was the responsibility of the administration to enrich the learning environment for the requisite experience for the child's development. There exists a relationship

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between the ECDE ownership and choice of teaching methods. This is because the study findings revealed that the ownership played a significant role in resource mobilization which in turn influenced the choice of teaching methods. The ECDE administration plays an invaluable role in the overall functioning of the ECDE centres such as teacher motivation and procurement of teaching/learning resources.

Recommendation

- i. The ECDE administrators should be persons who are fully conversant with education matters. They should have relevant knowledge and skills on school administration and thus in a position to offer professional guidance to the teachers and other staff in the school. They should be persons in the capacity to view the shortage of learning materials, thereby reducing the use of rote teaching methods.
- ii. The school ownership should be persons with competencies to mobilize the teaching/learning
- v.

resources.

- iii. There was need for the parents of the ECDE children to take an active role at the centres, to show interest in their children's progress, to engage actively with the school management committee, raise issues that concern them, and even to call for accountability from teachers and administrators. Parents should in essence provide a model and a catalyst that raises expectations while pointing to alternative kinds of engagement within the school.
- iv. There was need for teachers to enlist assistance in supporting children who need extra help. The presence of confident, able, friendly, helpful peers who love learning can be an important support for weak children. They should encourage the children to tell stories and teach class songs, dances and games and use available materials effectively.

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